

War of 1812, where our soldiers famously held Fort McHenry and our national anthem, the “Star-Spangled Banner,” was penned; through both world wars; Korea; Vietnam; the Persian Gulf war; and our most recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Maryland’s veterans and troops represent the best of our State and our Nation.

Earlier this year, I had an opportunity to help present a Congressional Gold Medal to former Tuskegee Airman William A. Colbert, Jr., a lifelong Marylander. Mr. Colbert enlisted in the Army Air Force in 1943 and achieved the rank of flight officer at the Tuskegee Army Air Field. While Mr. Colbert never saw combat, he learned to fly with the best and became a full-fledged Red Tail. And as part of the first all-Black combat unit in the U.S. Armed Forces, Mr. Colbert and his fellow servicemen broke through racial barriers without any expectation of fame or fanfare. Their distinguished service and enduring courage played a critical role in the later desegregation of our Nation’s military. Mr. Colbert always considered his contribution to the Tuskegee Airmen and his service to our country simply as what he was called to do as a citizen. Mr. Colbert passed away in early June but not before we were finally able to thank him for his extraordinary service to our Nation.

While we were able to honor Mr. Colbert, there are thousands of other veterans who remain nameless. That is why on August 5, 2015, I introduced the Korean War Veterans Memorial Wall of Remembrance Act of 2015, S. 1982, along with the senior Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN. Our legislation authorizes the addition of a Wall of Remembrance to the existing Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. The Wall of Remembrance would list the names of members of the Armed Forces of the United States who died in theater in the Korean war, as well as the number of servicemembers who were wounded in action, are listed as missing in action, or who were prisoners of war during the Korean war. Authorizing a wall of remembrance here in the United States is just one way we can help ensure that those who gave the ultimate sacrifice while serving our country in the “forgotten war” are no longer forgotten.

As America celebrates Veterans Day, we stand united in honoring the acts of selfless service from our Nation’s veterans. Our veterans and military men and women and their families need to know that we remember them not just on Veterans Day but every single day of the year. Our veterans have protected our country and defended our values. These Americans are the bravest among us, and we applaud the innumerable sacrifices that they and their loved ones have made for this great country. As we celebrate Veterans Day, our thoughts and prayers are also with “veterans to be”—the men and women who are currently serving our country, especially those in harm’s way.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF KEN SARO-WIWA

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today marks a dark milestone on the long road to environmental justice. Twenty years ago, Nigerian environmental and human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was hanged, along with eight fellow defendants, following an internationally denounced military tribunal.

Saro-Wiwa was a well-known author and television producer in his native Nigeria before he chose to devote himself full time to the causes of the Ogoni, a minority ethnic group of about 500,000 farmers and fishermen who hail from the Niger Delta. As president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People—MOSOP—he fought against the exploitation of Ogoni lands and the Ogoni people themselves by the oil drilling operations of Royal Dutch Shell.

As the oil industry grew to represent the main source of revenue for the Nigerian Government, the delta landscape was ravaged by oil spills and acid rain. Fertile farmland turned to oil-soaked wasteland. The region’s fish and wildlife were wiped out—along with the livelihood of the Ogoni. Out of the entire 5,000-person workforce employed by Shell in Nigeria, less than 100 were Ogoni.

Under Ken Saro-Wiwa’s leadership, MOSOP organized hundreds of thousands of Ogoni to demand environmental remediation, compensation for past damages, and a share in oil revenues. The regime of dictator General Sani Abacha responded with a brutal campaign of occupation, mass arrest, rape, execution, and the burning of Ogoni villages. In May 1994, Saro-Wiwa was abducted from his home and brought up on charges in connection with the murder of four Ogoni leaders. He was tried and convicted by a military tribunal that governments and human rights organizations worldwide condemned as fraudulent.

On November 10, 1995, Ken Saro-Wiwa was put to death.

“The only crime he and his colleagues had committed,” reads Saro-Wiwa’s citation for the prestigious Godman Environmental Prize, “was to demand sound environmental practices and to ask for compensation for the devastation of Ogoni territories.”

A human rights lawsuit brought by Saro-Wiwa’s son and other victims’ families in U.S. Federal court alleged that Shell bribed at least two witnesses in the 1995 tribunal and that Shell’s manager in Nigeria offered Saro-Wiwa’s brother, another jailed activist, release from captivity in exchange for abandoning the movement. That suit was settled by Shell for \$15.5 million, just days before going to trial in 2009, following a protracted legal battle.

The Ogoni cause has been taken up by other Ogoni, both within Nigeria and living in exile, including Saro-Wiwa’s sons. The struggle and death of Ken Saro-Wiwa serve as a lasting inspi-

ration to people of all nations who seek relief from corporate abuse, government corruption, and environmental ruin. We will remember his noble fight for the basic right of a people to live in harmony with the Earth.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. President, for National Disability Employment Awareness Month last month, I congratulate and honor the Palmetto Goodwill in North Charleston, SC, for their outstanding commitment to service and work with the AbilityOne Program.

In 1974, a small group of citizens in the Charleston area wanted to address the lack of opportunity for persons with disabilities. The Palmetto Goodwill of South Carolina has answered the call of service by becoming a part of the United States AbilityOne Commission network with their Champions Program.

The Palmetto Goodwill has successfully implemented the Champions Program which aims to empower citizens of South Carolina that are blind or possessing a disability. Through providing employment opportunities, the Palmetto Goodwill is making strides to continue the mission of National Disability Employment Awareness Month throughout the year. Currently 85 percent of their employed staff is persons with a disability. I applaud the stellar work of the Champions Program and therefore recognize the Palmetto Goodwill.

TRIBUTE TO MELISSA KALTENBACH

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I wish to honor the service and retirement of one of my dear friends and most respected employees, Melissa Kaltenbach. Melissa has served me and the people of Michigan with infinite loyalty and dedication for the past 27 years.

Melissa began working for me in the Michigan House of Representatives and continued her service with me in the State Senate, U.S. House, and now in the U.S. Senate as my director of constituent services.

In so many ways, Melissa’s job is one of if not the most important jobs on my staff. That is because her work impacts people where it matters most—in their daily lives. Her compassion toward the people of Michigan and understanding of the problems they face has been instrumental in setting the high standards for constituent services in my office and throughout the State of Michigan.

She has a unique ability to listen and understand the needs of people, and she demonstrates grace and respect for the dignity of others, even in the most stressful times and most difficult circumstances. She has gone above and beyond in so many ways—incredible empathy, unwavering loyalty, and infinite patience.